

THE
S E R M O N,

REALLY PREACHED IN THE
Parish Church of TEWKESBURY,

ON
E A S T E R - D A Y, 1771. ²

FOR WHICH A
PROSECUTION was commenced against the
PREACHER, Nov. 4, 1773.

WITH AN
EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO THE
Worthy INHABITANTS of TEWKESBURY, who
defrayed the Charges attending his Defence;

CONTAINING
REMARKS upon a NARRATIVE of the Origin and Pro-
gress of the said Prosecution,

By NEAST HAVARD, Gent.
TOWN-CLERK of the BOROUGH of TEWKESBURY.

By EDWARD EVANSON, M. A.

Audi alteram partem.

L O N D O N.

Printed for H. LAW, in AVE MARIA LANE; and Sold by
S. HARWARD, at TEWKESBURY. 1778.

THE
S E R M O N

PREACHED IN THE

Parish Church of TEWKESBURY.

ON
SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1773.

FOR WHICH A

PROSECUTION WAS COMMENCED AGAINST THE

PREACHER, NOV. 4, 1773.

WITH AN

EPITAPHIC DEDICATORY

Written by a Person who
was present at the



Remains upon a Narrative of the Origin and Pro-
gress of the said Prosecution.

By NEASE HAVARD, Gent.
Town-Clerk of the Borough of TEWKESBURY.

EDWARD EVANS, M.A.

L O N D O N
Printed by M. LANE, in Ave Maria Lane; and Sold by
S. HARRIS, at TEWKESBURY.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To *William Buckle*, Esq. *Richard Jackson*, Esq. *D' Avenant Hankins*, Esq. Mr. *Richard Bayzand*, and the rest of the truly generous inhabitants of the parish of *Tewkesbury*, who defrayed the charges attending my defence against the late malevolent Prosecution.

My most kind and liberal-minded benefactors,

THE very extraordinary *Narrative* lately published by Mr. Havard having laid me under a necessity of printing the sermon, *filed* by me in the Bishop's Court, as it was really preached on Easter-day, 1771, together with a *solemn affidavit* of it's originality from the only human party that could not be liable to mistakes about it, I beg leave to dedicate it to you; not as a publication worthy your acceptance (for having been preached from the first rough copy, and never intended for the press, it must needs be, in many respects, very incorrect, and indeed, in certain points of doctrine alluded to at the beginning and end, which were founded chiefly upon the *Gospel according to St. Matthew*, it does not speak my present sentiments) but merely as a public testimony of my esteem, and of my gratitude for that benevolent assistance,

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without which I must have sunk under the great expences of such a suit; but by which, with the favour of a gracious all-controlling providence, I have been enabled entirely to defeat every malicious intention of my prosecutor.

Had Mr. Havard regulated his narration by the latin precept * which embellishes his title-page, I should have read it, smiled, and paid no further regard to it. But, I am sorry to say, he hath grossly violated both parts of the duty of a narrator prescribed in his own motto, and hath so often asserted absolute falsities, as well as suppressed very material truth, that, in justice both to you and to myself, I think it right to take this opportunity of briefly animadverting upon his conduct in these respects; though having now done with all ecclesiastical concerns, the subject is become uninteresting, and the business of altercation was at all times displeasing to me.

In a printed letter of mine to the bishop of Litchfield, upon a very important subject, published the latter end of last year, having occasion to mention the late *singular* prosecution, without naming Mr. Havard or any other person, I spoke of it as owing it's institution to intemperate zeal and malice. That I spoke truly, you and every unprejudiced person, who was acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, knew before; and every

* Ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne quid veri non audeat.

In English, A narrator should never dare either to advance a falsehood or to suppress the truth.

other intelligent reader of Mr. Havard's performance must now be convinced. For, considering he gives it to the public as a *refutation* of that *charge*, it is a curiosity of the true *Hibernian* kind: In order to prove himself incapable of spite and malice on this occasion, he publishes a pamphlet, every page of which breathes a spirit of malicious rancour and personal resentment, not only against me, but against all whom he either knows or but supposes to have befriended me; and even against those, who only, in the honest discharge of their *official* duty, happened to be instrumental in frustrating the purpose of his prosecution. And, to shew how improbable it is, that *intemperate zeal* could have any part in so *praise-worthy* a business, he sets off with the abrupt introduction of a controversy, that happened long before I had any connection with Tewkesbury or with any person near it, between my predecessor and that honest man, and truly good Christian, George Williams; and informs us, that the preceding vicar, for five years before my presentation to that vicarage, had been blowing up the coals of orthodox zeal to such a degree of fervour, that the religious flame must almost unavoidably blaze out, upon the slightest agitation on my part. And indeed that it was owing to this, or some other extraordinary circumstance in the minds of some of my auditors at Tewkesbury, and not to my sermons themselves, that such mighty offence was taken at them, is manifest, because I never preached one sermon

there which I have not preached in other churches, some near to, and others at a great distance from Tewkesbury; and, far from giving offence in any other place, I had always every reason to believe they met with the same general approbation with which you well know they were received by a great majority of my own parishioners.

Mr. Townclerk's *Narrative* consists of a private epistolary correspondence, which he hath thought fit to exhibit to the public; *a new edition* of advertisements from *old news-papers, with additions*; and a few pages of *story-telling*.

The letters speak for themselves. But of Mr. Stock's I must observe, that, if there is not a mere verbal quibble and evasive meaning in them, I cannot account for their contents. That what I advanced in mine to Mr. H. was advanced upon the most certain grounds, would be very easy for me to shew, did not the number of years that have since intervened, and still more, a decent and humane regard to the truly pitiable situation of the bishop's health, who was a principal party concerned, dissuade me from renewing a dispute now not of the least importance to any body. I shall only add therefore, that, if I had not been fully satisfied before of the just foundation of my complaint as to it's main object, the transactions of Jan. 16, 1775, left no room for me or any impartial person present to doubt of it.

As to the advertisements, notwithstanding Mr. H. in direct violation of the *ne quid falsi*,
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more than insinuates that I had a hand in the composition of all those which were published in my favour; I protest, and some of *you* well know, with great truth, that, excepting the single one signed by myself, I was no more concerned in drawing up or *settling* any of them than Mr. Havard was. It is true, that two gentlemen amongst you sent me, when in London, the pleasing news of your numerous meeting on Nov. 10, 1773, your unanimous abhorrence of the prosecution, and resolution of supporting me under it, with a generosity far beyond my fondest hopes. And I will subjoin a faithful extract of such parts of the two letters as relate to that memorable event*, (which, in spite of all Mr. H's impotent

* L E T T E R I.

Dear Sir,

Thursday Morn. Nov. 11, 1773.

IT is with the greatest satisfaction I inform you, that the meeting last night exceeded my most sanguine expectations. Mr. ——— and almost all the first people attended, and the subscription being called for, one hundred and fifty pounds, or thereabouts, were immediately subscribed, with a most sincere and hearty declaration that they would put down as much more if necessary. The principal people in each street have undertaken to carry it about, so that I expect by Saturday one hundred pounds more. All parties are unanimous in putting the proceedings in the Gloucester Journal. I heartily wish you safe out of the hands of the inquisition, and shall be happy indeed to be in any way an instrument to effect it.

P. S. I opened the letter again to inform you, that it is the desire of your subscribers, that you will draw upon Mr. —, our treasurer, for any sum you want, forthwith; or that you will let him know by return of the post, and he will send you Bank-bills to the amount required.

LETTER

potent efforts to prevent it, will reflect a *lasting honour* upon the *majority* of the parishioners of Tewkesbury) as the most effectual way of contradicting the gross misrepresentation given of that affair by Mr. H.

In this part of his publication Mr. H. *sagaciously* observes, (*p. 57, note*) that 309 is not the major part of 4000, and upon that discovery, in contradiction again to the *ne quid falsi*, proceeds to affirm (*p. 91.*) that, instead of being with me on that litigious occasion, a *very large majority* of my parishioners were with him. You know the fact to be just the contrary. And if Mr. H. will take the trouble of reckoning up the number of distinct families of members of the church of England, comprized in the list of subscribers in my behalf, and compare it with the utmost number of distinct families of the same persuasion,

L E T T E R II.

Tewkesbury, Nov. 13, 1773.

I FIND Mr. ——— gave you a full account, in his letter of Thursday, of what passed at the Swan the preceding evening, which was the most unanimous meeting I ever attended. There appeared an ardour, if I may so express it, in every one present, to testify their regard to their minister, and a liberality of disposition to contribute in support of the good cause, beyond what I should ever have expected to have found. The whole proceedings, on the part of your friends, will make their appearance in the Gloucester paper on Monday se'nnight, to the disgrace of the prosecutors, or more properly called persecutors, and much to the honour, in my opinion, of the *major part* of your parishioners, and their much esteemed pastor.

which

which it is possible for him to enumerate as approvers of the prosecution; or if he will subtract the number of children from his 4000, which, at one stroke, would reduce them to about one-third) and from the remainder deduct all those dissenters from the establishment, with which he informs us the town abounds, together with all those who remained neutral on the occasion, (many of them, as I have the best reason to know, deterred from *publicly* joining the body of my friends only by apprehensions of feeling personally the effects of that *malice*, which my prosecutors *disavowed* in words, but so clearly evinced by their actions;) and lastly, if he will add to the present list the names of all those members of the same families, which are not inserted in it, he must be forced to acknowledge it himself. Mean while there is something as *mysterious and incomprehensible* in his arithmetic as in his creed. For at the bottom of *p.* 29 he intimates, that from the first Sunday in October, 1772, he and all his friends absented themselves from the parish church whenever I officiated; and yet you can testify, that as long as I continued to preach there, my audiences were always as numerous as they were ever usually known to be, and that the deficiency made by the secession of his *very large majority* of the congregation was scarcely perceptible.

Of *the additions* annexed by Mr. H. to the subscribers' names, it is unnecessary for me to say any thing. With the candid and judicious reader
they

they can answer only two ends: first, to shew the arrogance and purse-proud insolence of a man, who, himself following business, in a town composed, with a very few exceptions, entirely of trading people*, and being the *servant* of a corporation whose resident members are all tradesmen, at most but upon a level with many of the subscribers, attempts to depreciate the inhabitants in the public estimation, by a designation of their several trades; and, secondly, to demonstrate the great inconsistency there is between the spirit of true Christianity, and the spirit of this champion of the *legal* faith; who in matters purely of a religious concern, (in which, both reason and revelation assure us, there is no respect of persons in the sight of God, or of wise and good men,) affects to treat some of his fellow-creatures with contempt, merely on account of their worldly circumstances and rank in life.

In that part of the pamphlet which is really *narrative*, especially in the conversation pieces, so many things are misrepresented, that there is great room for animadversion, did I value either your time or my own so little as to enter into a regular controversy upon such a subject and with such an antago-

* A reader of Mr. H's pamphlet, unacquainted with the town of Tewkesbury, could hardly suppose it; but it is strictly true, that excepting the one superannuated gentleman mentioned with so much pomposity by Mr. H. the name of every gentleman then residing in the parish, independent of business, is found in the list of my benevolent protectors.

nist. But as that is very far from being the case, I shall only take notice of a few of the most material passages, in which he hath either asserted direct falshood, or designedly withheld the truth. At page 12, towards the close of a dialogue between him and me, given as circumstantially as if it were possible for him or any man, at the distance of six or seven years, to recollect the very words of an accidental conversation (the whole of which, however, he offers to confirm by an oath) he affirms that he told me of the offence my alteration in the apostles creed, and omission in the blessing, *had given*. Now the date of this conversation is, *a few evenings* after Easter-day, 1771; and the real fact is, that having accidentally chosen the doctrine of the resurrection, as taught in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, for the subject of my Easter sermon that year, but a very few days before it was preached, and sitting down to study that chapter (as I always thought it my duty to do before I pretended to explain the meaning of any passage of scripture from the pulpit) with a more particular attention than I had ever before paid to it, though I had read it over so many hundred times, (perhaps my having it very early by rote, from that frequency of it's use, was the cause of my inattention) I was exceedingly struck with observing, that instead of teaching us that mankind are to rise to a future life with the same bodies in which they die, the sole and obvious scope of St. Paul's argument is to assure us that we shall rise with very

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different

different bodies, and to convince us of the necessity of that difference. And from that time, and *never before*, I exchanged the word *body* for *dead* in the apostles' creed, because I could not understand the words "resurrection of the body" to mean any thing but a rising again of the very same body; and after the conviction *then* received, I must have been guilty of a direct falsehood if I had said *I believed* any such thing. As to the omission in the blessing, it was not made nor thought of till a considerable time afterwards. So that, according to this *fair and impartial Narrative*, the offence was taken before it's assigned cause existed.

With the same malicious purpose, for which at least *the date* of this part of the pretended conversation is falsified, Mr. H. in a note, p. 49, very falsely asserts that, in *my first sermon after reading the thirty-nine articles*, *I fully discovered my present objections* to them.

His usual method of exclaiming against my sermons, is to say, in general terms, that, "from the pulpit, I described my parishioners as bigotted zealots, papists, and idolaters;" that, in my *official capacity*, that is *from the pulpit* too, "I arraigned, denied, and condemned the most essential articles of belief of the church of England;" that, "the pulpit became my rostrum for libelling my opponents*", and for invectives
" against

* As this complaint of *libelling* was made in January 1775, and never heard of before Christmas, 1774, though it is expressed,

“ against the doctrines of the established church,”
 &c. &c. For general terms, as being incapable
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pressed, as usual, in general terms, as if it referred to many different facts, it can allude only to the two prefaces with which I introduced my sermons on Christmas-day, 1774, and Jan. 1, 1775, the only passages in all my sermons that make the least mention of my opponents. That the impartial reader therefore may judge for himself, I will here subjoin a faithful and exact copy of them both, together with the reason of my using them. Mr. Havard had printed the depositions of his witnesses, as well as the articles of accusation (no doubt *merely for the use of his friends in the House of Commons*) and I was informed that they were actually in the hands of some of the inhabitants of Tewkesbury; and as I had been shocked and astonished to find that several of the witnesses had deposed *positively* to circumstances that were really false, and particularly that two of them had, with equal falshood and impertinence, misrepresented a sermon that I preached on Christmas-day, 1772, (I say impertinence, because had their depositions concerning it been just and true, they were quite foreign from the original articles of accusation upon which the prosecution was founded,) I thought the best way to vindicate myself from their misrepresentations amongst my own parishioners, was to preach the very same sermon to them again, which I did with the following introduction:

LUKE ii. 8. *And there were in the same country shepherds, &c.*

The discourse which I am going to offer to your consideration from these words of the evangelical historian, is the very same that I delivered from this place two years ago, on occasion of the same anniversary festival that we now celebrate. And as the instruction it contains is more especially calculated for the particular circumstances of this sacred season, and, I persuade myself, is of no small importance, (if duly weighed and considered) to the cause of rational and true religion, I have resolved to propose it once more to be the subject of your attention and serious meditations, for the following reasons: 1st. Be-
 cause

of particular confutation, suit a false accuser best,
They admit only of a general negation, which I
here

cause there are many persons now in this audience who were not present when it was preached before. 2dly, Because few people are capable of apprehending the whole scope and meaning of an argument (especially if it be out of the common road) at once hearing; and, lastly, Because I find some parts of this very discourse have been either grossly misunderstood, or else wilfully as well as falsely misrepresented, in the course of the prosecution now carrying on against me. I am perfectly well acquainted with the principles in which my adversaries have been unhappily educated, and knowing the powerful and inveterate force of early-rooted and long-established prejudices, am very ready both to admit and make apologies for their un-benevolent conduct towards me; but surely religious zeal, whether it be real or pretended, should not induce any person (as it hath done several in their evidence concerning me) to be guilty of the crimes of rashly swearing to untruths, and bearing false witness against their neighbour.

The subject of my discourse the Sunday following was Acts iii. 26, and I introduced it with this preface:

It has been objected to me, by some of those who have been produced by my prosecutors to bear their testimony against me, that I have sometimes, in my discourses from this place, compared our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ to Moses. That I have done so is strictly true; and for very sufficient reason, viz. Because I have in the most solemn manner, vowed to instruct the people committed to my charge out of the holy scriptures, and to teach them only what I am persuaded is agreeable to the word of God. But what excites both my surprise and concern is, to find, that any Christian in this protestant country, with the Bible in his own hands, should be so entirely ignorant of the very fundamental article of the religion he professes, as to think such a comparison criminal in a minister of the Gospel. How far it may be consistent with human systems of Theology, to assert that Jesus Christ was a Jewish prophet like unto Moses, let

here give them, and appeal to your testimony, who heard all my sermons as well as either Mr. H's high-church or methodistical delators. But in this note he has *unwarily* fixed the precise day when the sermon, against which his accusation is brought, was preached. And as all my sermons are regularly dated with the particular time and place of preaching, and I could not conceive upon what grounds Mr. H. had advanced so impudent as well as malicious a falsehood, I looked back, first to the date of the certificate of my *reading in*, as it is called, at Tewkesbury, and then to my sermon of the same date. And I find it to be a mere practical, moral sermon (which, as it was preached to you

let them consider, who having in their infancy been taught those systems, are resolved, at all adventures, to adhere to them in maturer age, without ever candidly examining whether they are right or wrong. And let them consider also, that for every wilful abuse of the understanding he hath given them, God will bring men into judgment. For my own part, I know no other fit rule of doctrine for a public teacher, nor any other secure foundation of a Christian's faith, besides the plain and express words of the sacred scriptures; and if the likening Jesus Christ to Moses is to teach *Socinian doctrines*, it must inevitably follow, from the whole scope of St. Peter's argument in the passage from whence I have taken the words of the text, that *Socinian doctrines* were taught by God Almighty himself under the Old Testament, and by the apostles of Jesus Christ under the New.

If either or both of these may be called libels, I can only say of them, that they are much truer libels than what Mr. H. hath thought fit to exhibit against me, either in 1773, before the Consistory Court at Gloucester, or in 1778, before the public.

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more than once, I dare say several of you well remember) upon James ii. 14. *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? can faith save him?* Wherein is just as much reference to the thirty-nine articles, as to the charter of the borough of Tewkesbury. It contains indeed some animadversions on the doctrine of faith independent of works, as taught by one of the sects of Methodists, who usually (though, in the opinion of many eminent orthodox divines, without reason) take refuge under two or three of the articles. And therefore some calvinistic methodist must have been the original author of this calumny. And though I believe nobody takes Mr. H. (as he himself tells us) to be *a man of a particularly religious turn of mind*, nor suspects him of being a methodist, yet, from this instance, it plainly appears what quarter he received his misrepresentations from, upon the credit of which he hath thought fit to speak so positively and so falsely of the purport of my discourses, long after he himself and his *very large majority* had ceased to be my auditors.

In p. 28, Mr. H. renews the impertinence he was guilty of in the original articles of accusation exhibited against me; treating as a crime my thinking fit, on the first Sunday in October, 1772, to make use of the liberty left to every officiating minister by the rubrick, with respect both to the Nicene Creed and some other parts of the service (and which is continually practised in cathedrals)

in not reading the whole of that creed myself, though he acknowledges the whole was read, which is all the rubrick requires. But though either the error of the press, or the wilful mistake of his pen, has put the word *confusion* into this part of his *Narrative* instead of *surprize*, I should have passed it over unnoticed, if he had not, in the space of eight or nine lines, been guilty of the most aggravated violation of both the rules of his own motto. He tells us, that from this time he and his junto, *satisfied* of my *determined conduct*, meditated the prosecution as a *legal redress*. But what would he have us understand by my *determined conduct*? My *determination* to persist in not reading that creed myself? If that be what he would insinuate, could a faithful, honest narrator, in order to effect that, conceal a well-known truth which flatly contradicts such an insinuation? viz. that of the many times that creed occurred in the service when I officiated at Tewkesbury, after the first Sunday in October, 1772, as well as before, that was the only time when I did not read it entirely through. Or does he mean that I was determined to give offence to him and his friends? If so, is it not a scandalous transgression of the *ne quid veri non* (in the man who has attempted to make so dismal a tragedy, concluding with so very pathetic a catastrophe, upon the subject of my card to the poor *gentlewoman of considerable fortune, who was sixty years of age*) neither to insert nor even mention the note I sent that same Sunday to his co-promoter Mr. Collet,

Collet, (who; and his brother, were all the *some of them* that *quitted the church* upon the occasion) giving the reasons of and apologizing for my conduct in that instance, professing my concern for the effect I saw my not reading the creed had had upon him and his brother, and assuring them that had I apprehended any such thing, I would on no account have omitted it; adding likewise, that in order to avoid offending them and the other gentlemen, who subscribed the letter of September 30, and who came to church only on a Sunday morning, I had *determined*, for the future, to go every Sunday morning to my other church, and leave Tewkesbury to my curate? which I accordingly did, at no small inconvenience to myself, and (what I minded much more) to the dissatisfaction of some of my friends. Either way therefore this matter is very unfairly represented, and a very material truth unjustifiably suppressed. But there is also a direct transgression of the *ne quid falsi* in this passage, which must not be suffered to pass in silence on several accounts. Mr. H. is pleased to say, he “believes I read no further of the Nicene Creed, “on that day, than the word *invisible*.” And, by the mis-information of some inattentive hearer, this was the manner in which the twenty-second article of the original accusation was expressed. Now, though I know it is customary with Mr. H. to profess his belief in what his mind cannot be convinced of, yet I will venture to say he does not believe this, because he knows it to be false. He
 knows,

knows, that when a man says or swears I read no farther than such a particular word, it can prove no more than that he did not hear me read farther, which it is possible might be owing only to some defect either in his hearing or his attention, for which reason he must be a bold man, that will swear positively to any such negative proposition. But a man who affirms that he actually heard me read farther, cannot be liable to mistake about it, and therefore one such witness as the last outweighs fifty of the first sort. He knows too, that before the witnesses he thought fit to produce were examined, he shewed that article to the parish clerk, (who, for many obvious reasons, was the most likely person in the whole congregation to know the truth of the case with certainty) and *he* told him the "article was not true, for that he heard "me repeat distinctly to the words *only Son of "God."* That he then told the clerk "many "people said that I left off at the word *invisible."* Upon which the clerk declared, "that whoever "said so would bear witness to a falshood, and "that he was ready to testify what he then said "upon oath." You know that the clerk's account was true, and that great numbers of the congregation of that day were ready to make oath of the same. Yet, after this clear conviction of the falshood of this article, as my prosecutors had stated it, Mr. H. suffered several of his witnesses to swear, and they did *positively* swear, that I read no farther than the word *invisible*. How an attorney

torney feels upon procuring evidence to prove his allegation, even when false, I cannot pretend to judge. But in my estimation of things, the crime next in degree *above* that of a man's swearing falsely himself, is that of persuading, and next *below* it, that of permitting others to swear *positively* in his behalf, to what he knows or has the strongest reasons to believe is false.

At page 51, Mr. H. has thought fit to assert that, at the same time when I made the alteration and omissions he so grievously complains of at Tewkesbury, I *read the Liturgy* at other churches *without any variations or omissions*. To this assertion I can only give the following concise plain answer, that it is a malicious and infamous falsehood. From the time when I first deviated in any degree from the express words of the Liturgy, so long as I continued to read the prayers myself, I performed the service in the same manner, in every church where I officiated. And the only *pretended* foundation that I can suppose Mr. H. to have for so false and scandalous an assertion is, that perhaps he hath interrogated * some members of the congregations he particularly mentions, whether they had observed me to alter or omit any thing in

* I was actually informed last year (no doubt whilst this Narrative was preparing) that Mr. H. had been questioning the clerk of one of the parishes he names; and have reason to believe, that if the man had ever observed, or then remembered, me to have made any variations, he would not have acknowledged it, from a suspicion that Mr. H. was seeking grounds for a fresh prosecution.

reading the service, and that they answered no, as was most likely to be the case; for when it is considered, first, that the sense of the blessing is just as complete when the words *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* are omitted, as when they are inserted; and, secondly, that whatever prayers a minister may use in the pulpit, either before or after sermon, they are not prescribed by the rubrick, but left entirely to his own discretion, and cannot therefore with any reason be regarded as part of the Liturgy; and that the only alteration ever made by me, in the ordinary service of the church, was the exchange of the word *body*, in the Apostles' Creed, for *dead*; it is highly probable that many persons in those parishes might constantly attend church when I officiated, and not be sensible that any alteration was made. But what does that prove? Not that I did not make the alteration, but that what was made the pretended cause of so much stir and bustle at Tewkesbury, and what Mr. H. calls an invasion of his *religious and legal rights*, was in itself so very trifling and insignificant, that, amongst unprejudiced people, it was either not perceived or else regarded with indifference.

In the note, p. 80 and 81, Mr. H. pretends to account for copies of the articles being printed. But I see attorneys, as well as doctors, differ. For his proctor told me, they were intended only for their own use and that of their counsel and other parties concerned in the suit, without one syllable of the promoter's honourable acquaintance in the

House of Commons. I have since had reason to be perfectly satisfied with that measure, whatever Mr. H. himself may be, and to regard it as a very *providential* circumstance in my favour. But, at the time, knowing that when 500 copies (a number so monstrously disproportionate to the cause assigned for printing any) were once printed, they would be dispersed (as they were afterwards well known to be) into many hands, both near to and at considerable distances from Gloucester and Tewkesbury; I remonstrated strongly, though in vain, against their being printed, upon the obvious principle of the iniquity of prejudicing the public against a man by the propagation of a charge, in the most material points groundless and false, and which in equity ought to be wholly looked on as such, till it was legally adjudged to be true. And had I received the least intimation of the use for which, it seems, they were *really* intended by the promoters of the prosecution, I should have urged my remonstrances with still greater vehemence. For does not every impartial person see that the injury done me was aggravated to the highest degree possible, when, in the very beginning of the suit, my adversaries' accusation was stated to that legislative assembly as true, and from thence re-echoed, with still greater misrepresentation, throughout the kingdom, in the daily news-papers? And if that unwarrantable transaction was any ways instrumental in defeating the petition of *the Feathers Tavern Society*, (with whom I never was any other-

wise

wife connected than as a distant well-wisher to the success of their cause) *all the parties* concerned in it were then undoubtedly guilty of a double injustice. But whatever tended to hurt or injure me in the progress of that suit appeared right to my prosecutors. And therefore it is with singular complacency I reflect, that the further use their agents made of the very same printed articles, (of which neither Mr. Jenner nor I had the least suspicion, till it was accidentally discovered in court) proved so fatal to their own cause. For there is something peculiarly satisfactory in that species of *providential* justice, which is so often seen to take place in the affairs of men, where *they who have digged a pit for others, fall into the midst of it themselves.*

Nec lex est æquior ulla,

Quam necis artifices arte perire suâ.*

In his 86th page Mr. H. mentions, in terms that to me are unintelligible, an overture of accommodation made by your late benevolent and amiable representative Mr. Joseph Martin. But whatever the *Narrator's* meaning may be, I assure you I never proposed, nor would have agreed to, the appointment of any curate, without the previous consent and approbation of my own friends. As to the bell-ringing complained of, you can testify for me that, though absent, I did every thing in my power to prevent it; and that,

* *In English*, No law is more equitable than that which enjoins that the contrivers of the destruction of others should perish by their own contrivance.

in consequence of my letters on that occasion, several of you actually contributed to bribe the ringers not to ring, and by that means prevented their ringing for two or three days after the decision of the Dean of the Arches was received.

To the charge brought in p. 88, against another of my sermons upon Acts vii. 59. I answer, by subjoining a faithful extract of the only part of that sermon, which can be supposed so much as to hint at my own situation, or the conduct of my prosecutors; that Mr. H. himself, as well as others who, like him, did not hear it, may know upon what foundation his accusation is built*.

Very

* Having, in a series of historical remarks, deduced the state of intolerance and religious persecution, from the tragic fate of St. Stephen to the abolition of the writ for burning heretics in our own country, during the reign of Charles II. I concluded the discourse in the following words:

Yet still there are left, in this protestant country, some vestiges of even papal tyranny; and some laws, the produce of ages of religious ignorance and intolerance, are hitherto unrepealed, which malicious informers have it in their power to revive, and may still make use of, to molest and harass, not only our Roman Catholic and Dissenting brethren who reside peaceably amongst us, but also many rational and conscientious members of our own church.

But if there are any, amongst us, so far actuated by the anti-christian spirit of persecution, as to think it right, in any case respecting religion, to revive the now feeble force of those obsolete laws, let me entreat them to consider, that it is of the utmost consequence to the virtue and happiness of the people, and to the cause of true religion, (which, between the philosophic infidelity of the higher ranks of life, and the enthusiastic superstition of the vulgar, is every where losing ground)

that

Very soon after the preaching of that sermon, and long before I heard what the result was of Mr.

that the truth, the light, and the moral influence of the holy gospel should be perfectly restored amongst us. And, that the natural consequence of persecution of every kind, for religious opinions, is either to deter those who are most capable of investigating, and teaching us, the truth, from endeavouring at all to find it, (which, by the way, has been the certain cause of that general ignorance in religious matters, which has hitherto prevailed amongst us) or else to induce them to violate their Christian duty both to God and to their brethren, by playing the part of hypocrites and keeping their knowledge to themselves.

Let us consider too, that all human laws are really impious and unjust, which encroach upon the spiritual authority of Jesus Christ, and would abridge that liberty with which he hath made all his disciples free.

Lastly, as we are Christians, let us consider, that our benevolent religion absolutely forbids us to occasion the least injury to our fellow-creatures on any account, or in any manner whatsoever. The essential principle of a Christian spirit is love, and *love worketh no ill to his neighbour*. In cases that regard ourselves, we are not permitted to *render evil for evil, or railing for railing*, but are commanded to *bless them that curse us; to be kind even to our greatest enemies, and to overcome evil with good*. And in such as more peculiarly concern our religion and our God, we are assured, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*; and are directed to leave it to God to *reward every man according to his works; for it is written vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord*.

On the other hand, if at any time the intemperate zeal of any of our brethren, in behalf of their own religious prejudices, should excite them to endeavour to enforce any intolerant laws against ourselves, let us bless the good providence of God, that the most inhuman and sanguinary of those laws are long since repealed, and that the temper of the present times, and the disposition of our present governors, are much more inclined

Mr. Martin's well-intended interposition, having been informed, before the decision of the Court of Arches, of some inhuman as well as illiberal instances of spite and resentment shewn to some of the lower ranks of people, upon my account, and finding that, after that event, Mr. H's impetuous temper knew no bounds, but broke out into the most violent and indecent transports of rage towards some of the principal inhabitants and most respectable characters in the parish, to the oblivion of all former friendship, and even of past obligations; in order to prevent the increase, and (if possible) the continuance of such unneighbourly and unchristian animosities, and to preserve or restore peace and harmony as far as was in my power, I prevailed upon you to consent to my leaving the town entirely, and retiring to my other living, which I accordingly did, at a considerable expence; and for near two years and a half, that

inclined to restrain, than to encourage the spirit of religious persecution. And with respect to the men themselves, howsoever we may blame their conduct, let us entertain no rancour against their persons, nor conceive the least desire of revenge. So entire an ignorance of the true spirit of our holy religion, so strong a delusion as can make men fancy they are acting well and righteously in the sight of God, whilst they are transgressing the most important and plainest precepts of the gospel, is more deserving our pity than our resentment. And therefore, whatever may be the issue of their unbrotherly attempts to injure us, let us be ever ready to cry out with the blessed martyr, whose tragic fate hath led us to these reflections, and with the same fervent charity and sincerity that he did, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge!*

Mr.

Mr. H's appeal was depending before the Delegates, you well know, that I not only did no ecclesiastical duty of any kind at Tewkesbury, in my own person; but did not offend your irritable Town-clerk even with my personal residence there. Yet still Mr. H. asserts that my *behaviour* was *such* that *it was impossible* terms of accommodation *should be attended to*, and therefore Mr. Martin's *proposals were rejected*. They were so, and Mr. H. now knows the price of that rejection; which, if it had been twice as great, I am persuaded no impartial person would ~~think~~ greater than a man of such obstinate, implacable resentment deserved to pay.

In page 91. (where, by the way, speaking of my *cession* as of a thing that happened last year, he shews that he uses that word as he is wont to do others upon more solemn occasions, without understanding what it means; for my cession of the vicarage of Tewkesbury being made at latest in the year 1770, it was not in my power either to *cede* or to *resign* it in 1777.) Mr. H. informs us, that by the patron's thinking fit, at length, to declare the vicarage vacant, and another incumbent's being put into possession of it, *the purpose and intent* of his party were *fully answered*, and his *original cause of complaint thereby removed*. The only thing that was *thereby removed* was my personal incumbency; so that Mr. H. has, in his letter of proxy, given it under his hand and seal, and here frankly avows, that the original cause of his complaint was my personal incumbency upon that vicarage

d

only;

only; and that *the purpose and intention* of those who *from the first approved the prosecution* was, after all, not the correction of any irregularities in the performance of the church service, though so much clamour was made about them, not the *redress* of any particular grievance real or pretended, but merely my personal deprivation of the vicarage of Tewkesbury. And thus after eking out a pamphlet, by the help of *familiar epistles*, advertisements, acts of court, &c. to go fair pages in octavo, in order (as he tells us in his preface) to refute my allegation, that the prosecution originated in malice, (for as to Mr. H. I knew him too well to lay religious zeal to *his* charge) he adds the 91st to confute his own refutation (if by chance the reader should think it one) and there, in express terms, acknowledges that the sole motive of his own conduct in this prosecution, (and, if we believe him, of all his party too) was downright malice and personal dislike. Indeed if this had not been the case, the prosecution could never have been commenced; for had my prosecutors, like Mr. Bayzand, been only dissatisfied with the omissions in the service, without any personal pique to me, they would like him have been fully satisfied when they found, that by my engaging an additional curate solely for that purpose, their *original objection*, as stated in their own letter of September 30, 1772, was entirely removed, and the Liturgy was regularly performed without the least alteration or omission of any kind. Yet, though this

was

was really the fact, for above seven months before the prosecution was instituted, the prayer of the promoters was that I might be *punished and condemned in costs of the suit*, for offences which had so long ceased, and which there was not the least probability would ever be repeated again. An aggravated charge against my sermons was another article on which their suit was founded, but nothing can more plainly demonstrate how ill founded that charge was, than their own libel itself. For though they took in the whole time of my preaching at Tewkesbury, from the beginning of the year 1770 to July 1773, they could find only one sermon in all that period to rest the main part of their accusation upon, and for that they were forced to go so far back as Easter-Day, 1771; and, after all, their allegation concerning it was really false. As to the pamphlet, which was another ground of the prosecution, Mr. H. himself seems ashamed of that part of their libel, and well he may; for it was not in their power to prove it mine, and, being anonymous, it no more concerned the inhabitants of Tewkesbury than it did the inhabitants of York. To give some shadow of a reason however for their interesting themselves so particularly about it, he says, in the last page of his *Narrative*, that he *believes it was first publicly sold at Tewkesbury*. This is the second instance of his endeavouring to avoid a direct falsehood, by the help of the words *I believe*. But it will no more serve his turn in this case, than in the former, for it is impossible he should

believe it. By the depositions of his own witnesses it appears, that Mr. Harward, the only person who sold the books at Tewkesbury, never had one of them from me; but that he *bought* them all in London, before he could *sell* them in Tewkesbury. Notwithstanding which Mr. H. has the assurance to give it under his hand to the public, that he *believes they were first publicly sold at* Tewkesbury.

But the most infamous and evidently malicious article of their libel, upon which they built their *fairest* hopes of success, was a private conversation at the house of one the witnesses, whose name I will not mention, and for whose sake I am sorry Mr. H. has compelled me to take any notice of the affair at all; because I have a very good opinion of him in all other respects, and am persuaded that he *meant* well even in his zeal against my heterodoxy. And, as there is something amiable in the bias which friendship and gratitude for the obligations of himself and his family to Mr. H. may reasonably be supposed to have had upon his mind, I am very ready both to forgive and to apologize for his conduct on that occasion. But Mr. H. having in his Narrative repeated in general terms the whole of his original libel against me, and, in the margin of his 46th page, referred particularly to the evidence respecting that conversation, it is become necessary for me to observe, that since it is well known how greatly the exchange of one single word for another alters the sense of a sentence,

sentence, and that it is not possible for any man, after a long interval of time, to recollect the exact words used in such a conversation, it was not consistent with the character of a candid and honest man, even from that consideration alone, to venture, for the purpose of injuring another, to swear in April, 1774, to the express words of a conversation that passed in April, 1771. This however is not all. The conversation alluded to passed under that gentleman's own roof, in consequence of my lending him, in the most candid and confidential manner, the original copy of the sermon here submitted to the public, in order to undeceive him concerning it, and (as he himself acknowledges upon oath) under a promise from him that *no unfair advantage should be taken of it*. Surely then! I had every reason to expect, that whatever was said on such an occasion passed under the seal of social confidence. And I believe every impartial person will agree, that the betraying that private conversation, especially for so malicious a purpose, was such an unjustifiable flagrant violation of the sacred laws of honour and hospitality, as reflects equal disgrace upon the party himself, and upon the prosecutor who endeavoured to avail himself of his evidence. At least, I know, (if my own heart does not deceive me) that nothing could have induced me, on such an occasion, to act the part either of the one or the other.

Mr. H. seems desirous the public should think, that the reason assigned in his proxy was the sole
reason

reason of his withdrawing his appeal in November last. But I can tell you of another, which, considering the large sum he had to pay for costs, was most likely to be the prevailing reason. For I am informed that, but a few weeks before the day appointed for the final hearing, he took the advice of *one* of his counsel at Doctors Commons, who, instead of giving him any hopes of success, advised him to withdraw the appeal, and thereupon notice was given to my proctor that he had determined to withdraw it. Yet, as if he imagined this consultation, and the result of it was not known, he is weak enough to boast, that if another incumbent had not been *inducted*, (for presentation, it seems, was not sufficient) *he would have met me on the 11th of November with the same body of counsel.*

As he has now shewn that he is possessed of a pretty comfortable share of persevering obstinacy even in an error, perhaps he says true; and he might really have been wrong-headed enough to have *met me*, (as he calls it) without, or even contrary to, the advice of his advocate. But the only end of our *meeting* would have been the addition of another 100 or 150*£*. to the more than 1000*£*. which, I am well assured, this *meritorious* prosecution hath already cost Mr. H. and his associates.

Having thus taken as much notice of Mr. H's *Narrative* as seemed necessary, to set both the prosecution and the *Narrator* in their true lights, and thereby, I hope, sufficiently discharged my duty to you as well as to myself, whatever Mr. H. may think

think fit to do, I here take my final leave of him, and of this disagreeable and now unimportant subject.

But for you, my generous friends and benefactors, whatever distance may separate us, my *heart* will be ever with you. And if the cloud, which (in consequence of the late sacrifice I have judged it right to make of my worldly interests, to what I believe to be my Christian duty) at present hangs over me, shall ever disperse, and my temporal prospects brighten, every opportunity (should any such occur) of testifying my gratitude to you, by actions as well as words, will give me peculiar felicity. In the mean while, I most devoutly pray to the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that he will be graciously pleased to reward you, with his choicest blessings upon yourselves and families, for the benevolent protection and assistance you so nobly and so effectually afforded me, in the day of difficulty and legal persecution, for which I can only thank you.

I am ever,

With the sincerest esteem and affection,

Your greatly obliged and

London,
May 14, 1778,

Faithful humble servant,

Edward Evanfon.

A F F I D A V I T.

IN the presence of that infinite eternal Being, to whom all hearts are open and from whom no secrets are hid, I, Edward Evanston, do solemnly declare and swear, that the printed sermon hereunto annexed (the original copy of which I gave into the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Gloucester, in the course of the prosecution instituted against me there) contains the whole of the sermon preached by me in the parish church of Tewkesbury, on Easter-Day, 1771. And that I am not conscious of using, but, on the contrary, am as certain as I can be, that I did not use one word in the preaching it besides what is here published. So help me Almighty God, on whose gracious bounty and assistance alone all my hopes depend!

Edward Evanston.

1 COR. Chap. xv. Ver. 21, 22.

FOR SINCE BY MAN CAME DEATH, BY MAN
CAME (or more properly cometh) ALSO THE
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. FOR AS IN
ADAM ALL DIE, EVEN SO IN CHRIST SHALL
ALL BE MADE ALIVE.

IN these words, and through all the remaining part of this chapter, St. Paul introduces a comparison, or rather contrast, between Adam and our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who are both particularly distinguished from all the rest of the human species by their being formed immediately by the almighty power of the Creator, without the intervention of natural means; on which account they are each of them, by the holy evangelist, emphatically called * *the Son of God*. It follows, therefore, that either our Lord and Master Jesus Christ was truly and literally a man, of the very same nature, and having the same kind of soul and body, with which the first Adam was created; or else this, and many other important passages of holy writ, must be deemed entirely false. Indeed, this consequence is so very obvious, that, I think, he is almost universally acknowledged to have been perfectly a man, even by those who, in the same

* Luke iii. 38.

breath, contradict their own assertion. But it is far from my present intention to censure, or even to enquire into, the speculative opinions of any set of christians whatsoever: nor have I chosen the words of the apostle now read to you, with a design to make them alone the subject of our present meditations; but merely because they are the introduction to that clear and ample explanation of the doctrine of our own resurrection, which St. Paul has given us in the sequel of this chapter. A doctrine which, the glorious event we this day commemorate, was intended at once to convince and to remind us of; and which, notwithstanding all the plain and satisfactory instructions of the great apostle, I fear, is, by the generality of modern christians, but very imperfectly understood. But since it is the most important, indeed the fundamental, article of all our religious faith, I hope I shall not be thought to misapply the present occasion, by requesting your particular attention to the main points of that rational and useful lesson, taught us in this well-known chapter of St. Paul's first letter to his disciples at Corinth.

The two chief objects the apostle had in view, were the order of the resurrection as to time, and the manner of it.

Having expressly asserted, and by unquestionable evidence proved, the certainty of our Lord's resurrection; in the words of the text and the preceding and following verses, he clearly infers from it the most stedfast assurances of the future resurrection

rection of all mankind. But that we might not conclude that the whole human species will be raised from the dead, at one and the same time, contrary to many clear and exprefs prophecies of our holy religion, the apostle tells us, that though *every one* will be raised, yet it will be *in his own order. Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming; then cometh the end.* For as our Saviour Jesus Christ was the first man that God raised from the dead, to the inheritance of eternal glory and immortality, in reward of his sinless life and perfect obedience unto death; so also, those that are his, particularly that glorious company of apostles and early converts to christianity, who forsook all to follow their Lord and Master; who, as far as concerned this life alone, were of all men the most miserable, and who at last sealed their testimony with their blood, shall be distinguished from the rest of mankind, in the order and glory of their resurrection.

That *the kingdoms of this world* will at length *become the kingdom of God and his Christ*, is the universal language of all the prophets, both of the Old and New Testament; and that our blessed Saviour will come again in person upon the earth, to take that kingdom upon him, and establish universal righteousness amongst men, he, on many occasions, taught his disciples before his death; but much more particularly afterwards, in his revelation to his apostle St. John. For the speedy accomplishment of this great event, he hath di-

rected us to pray to God, in that article of our daily devotions, "Thy kingdom come;" and to this coming of Christ it is that St. Paul alludes, both in his epistle to the Thessalonians and in the passage we are now considering. For St. John assures us*, that the glorious reign of Christ on earth shall commence *a thousand years* before the end of the world and the general resurrection of the sons of men; and that, at the commencement of that happy period, all those who have been slain for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, shall rise again to glory and eternal life; and, St. Paul tells us†, *shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air*, and shall reign with him there during the whole continuance of that paradisaical state of the earth; after which will come the end and total destruction of this globe; and, at the same time, the whole multitude of the dead, both small and great, shall rise again, and appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

The apostle goes on, to instruct us still farther in the nature and consequences of this reign of Christ over the earth. He reminds us, that it is foretold of him, in the book of Psalms, that God would *put all things under his feet*; therefore, says he, *he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet*.

In the present state of things, sin and wickedness appear every where triumphant, and the sove-

* Rev. xx. 4.

† 1 Thess. iv. 17.

reignty of God's anointed (for that is the meaning of Christ) is so far from being acknowledged by whole nations, that it is to be feared very few individuals sincerely obey his laws. But at his second glorious coming, he will utterly destroy all the enemies of his gospel and of human happiness, and extirpate sin and Satan from the earth. And as *the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death*, when, by the universal rising of the dead to judgment, that victory also shall be completed, and *he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power*; then, St. Paul tells us, *he himself shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, and be subject to him who put all things under him*; he will no longer retain the divine power with which he is at present, without measure, endowed, to answer the gracious purposes of God's all-wise providence over the affairs of men, but will then resign it to the Almighty Giver, *that God may be all in all*.

I am aware that this account of the person and nature of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, is not at all conformable to the notions and received opinions of many of our Christian brethren. But, at the same time, I am thoroughly convinced myself, as I am persuaded every other attentive and unprejudiced reader of this scripture must be, that the doctrine I have now delivered to you, is truly and literally the doctrine of St. Paul, of our blessed Saviour's own chosen vessel, and great apostle to the Gentiles. And though I would not unnecessarily offend the scruples even of the weakest brother,

ther, yet if I should neglect the duties of my function, in order to *please men*, I should no longer be *the servant of Christ*. Having taken upon me the weighty office of his minister, my chief concern is, to teach nothing but what is strictly agreeable to the doctrine of himself and his apostles. And woe is me, and every other minister of the gospel, that teaches any thing else! For, says the apostle, whose particular doctrine we are now considering, * “*Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you, than that which ye have received, let him be accursed.*” A solemn, fearful execration! which should not only deter men from rashly and inconsiderately taking upon themselves the office of teaching others, but should also make all preachers of the gospel cautious of departing, in any degree, from the express words, or obvious sense of the holy scriptures.

After giving us this clear account of the different periods, at which it is God’s will the resurrection should take place, and explaining to us the nature, beginning, and end of the universal kingdom and reign of Christ, St. Paul resumes a reflection, which he had made before in the preceding part of this chapter; which is, that if it was not for the certainty of this great article of

* Gal. i. 8, 9.

our faith, no man of common prudence would have been converted to the Christian religion. For if Jesus Christ himself remained still dead, and his disciples, who had suffered death for his sake, were never to rise to life again, who would be baptized into a vain belief in these *dead* preachers of the Gospel? or who would, for the sake of the *dead* alone, encounter the most unnatural cruel conflicts, and continual hazards of his life, to which the apostle himself, and all the first followers of Jesus Christ were daily, hourly exposed? In such circumstances, it had surely been wiser to have adopted the maxim of the careless epicurean, renounced their religion, and have made the most of the sensual enjoyments of the present day, regardless of futurity, because the next might put a final period to their existence.

He then intimates, that since the doctrine of the resurrection is built upon such sure grounds, and the proofs of it, in our blessed Saviour's instance, were so indisputable and satisfactory, the mind of no sincere Christian can be deceived into a disbelief of it, till his morals have been corrupted, and rendered vicious by sinful and evil communications. For, that if men had *the knowledge of God*, and of the truth of his revelation by Jesus Christ, which, to their *shame* be it spoken, great numbers in our times, as well as some in the time of the apostle, have not, they would abstain from every kind and degree of *sin*, rouse from their supine lethargy of
 sensual

sensual indulgence, and *awake to righteousness* and true holiness.

After this useful and judicious reflection, our heaven-taught instructor proceeds to teach us, in explicit terms, the manner of our rising again from the dead; a point of instruction which was absolutely necessary, in order to obviate the scruples and objections of those who, before they could admit the gospel doctrine of a resurrection, demanded how the dead were to be raised, and with what body they should come? When the Gentiles first heard of the resurrection of the dead, imagining that the apostles meant by it the resurrection of the same body with which every man died, they ridiculed and rejected it as both improbable and absurd; and if that had really been their doctrine, it would have remained still liable to endless and insurmountable difficulties and objections. For though it must be acknowledged that the all-seeing eye of God, keeps every atom of the creation distinctly under it's view, and though it be lost and imperceptible to us, traces it through all it's numberless vicissitudes of form and station; and that it is therefore certainly within the power of Omnipotence to call every wandering particle home, and reunite them in the very same specific body that each man was possessed of at his death; yet when we consider the bodies with which men are actually seen to die, some emaciated with famine or pining sickness, some worn out and decayed with mere old age, some in the full maturity of

manhood,

manhood, and some, again, in the immaturity and imperfect state of infancy and youth, some deprived of many of the organs of sense, and, lastly, some destitute of entire limbs; what an injurious and unworthy idea should we have of God's gracious intent in our resurrection, if we should suppose he meant to restore mankind to life again in those very individual bodies in which they die! Had the first preachers of the Holy Gospel taught men thus, it had been no wonder that their doctrine became a *stumbling block* to many, and was by more accounted *foolishness*. But St. Paul, if we will attend to him, will give us more rational and worthy notions of providence, and of that great and important event. Notwithstanding which, there are too good grounds for apprehending, that many members of our own church believe in a resurrection of the same body; and it is well if even some of our instructors themselves are not in the number. We know, that almost within the memory of our own times, one of the wisest * and best men, and most sincere Christians, that this or any other country has produced since the age of the holy apostles, was railed at and traduced, branded with the names of heresy and infidelity by learned divines, and even by a bishop of our church, only for observing, that since, notwithstanding the prodigious changes our bodies are continually undergoing, from the unformed em-

* Mr. Locke.

bryo, to the last state of helpless decrepit age every man is still conscious, in every period of his life, of the sameness of his own person, it is evident that our identity depends upon our minds alone; and therefore it is by no means necessary, in order to constitute the same persons, that the dead should rise to life again with the self same bodies in which they have either lived or died. And yet our apostle, in this well-known chapter, teaches us exactly the same doctrine, nay, he carries it much farther, for he not only shews us that such a resurrection of the dead is unnecessary, but actually impossible, as we shall see in the sequel of the Scripture now under our consideration.

To those silly objectors who scrupled the doctrine of a resurrection, from a supposition that it must mean the rising again of the same body, our apostle replies, that the mere common course of natural vegetation might have taught them a wiser lesson: "*Thou fool, says he, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be.*" The very grain we bury in the earth, in hopes of a succeeding harvest, does not begin to vegetate until it is actually putrified and corrupted, and when, in that perished decayed state, it doth sprout forth and grow, how totally different from the bare naked grain we threw into the ground is that compound body which we now behold, consisting of root, blade, stalk and ear! Thus every common instance of the renewal of vegetative life, is a
lively

lively emblem of the resurrection of mankind; it is absolutely a new creation, and bespeaks the almighty hand of the great author of universal nature. *God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every different species of seed it's own particular body.*

If, from the vegetable, we turn our eyes to the animal world, we shall find that the bodies of all animals are not composed of the same flesh; but that they differ exceedingly, according to the different stations and circumstances in which they are placed. The bodies of men are very different from those of beasts, of beasts from those of fishes, and of fishes from those of birds. And as the different situations of animals on earth require that their bodies should be of such various kinds, so likewise must the inhabitants of heaven differ still more widely from the inhabitants of the earth. *There are, therefore, celestial bodies also, as well as terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is so far superior to the glory of the terrestrial, that we are no more fitted to inhabit heaven, with such bodies as we now possess, than beasts are to lead the life of fishes, fishes of birds, or birds of men.* And if we leave the things of this earthly globe, and survey the stars, those brilliant bodies of the firmament, we shall still find them too differing from each other in brightness, according to the place they hold in the order of the universe. The splendor of the sun differs greatly from that of the moon, and the splendor of the moon from that of

the other stars. Just so great a difference is there between the nature of our bodies before death and after the resurrection. They are buried or *sown*, as the apostle metaphorically expresses it, in a state of *corruption, dishonour, and weakness*. But they will be raised *incorruptible, glorious, and endued with power*. They are *sown natural bodies*, or, as it should have been translated, *animal bodies*, but they will be raised *spiritual bodies*. For there are spiritual bodies as well as animal. Thus, Moses tells us, *the first man, Adam, was made a living soul*, but *the last Adam is made a quickening spirit*, i. e. a spirit endued with the power of raising up the dead to eternal life. This spiritual state of man however was not first in order, but his animal life, and afterward that which is spiritual. *The first man was of the earth, earthy; the second man is our Lord Jesus Christ*, who, since his ascension into heaven, has been clothed with a glorious and spiritual body, and at God's appointed time will come *from heaven* to establish his universal kingdom over the world. And as both our blessed Saviour and ourselves have, in conformity to the first Adam, *borne the image of the earthy* in this life, so shall we, in the next, be made conformable to the now spiritual nature of the second Adam, and *bear the image of his heavenly body*. For *such as the earthy is*, those must be *that are earthy*, and *such as is the heavenly*, *they also must be that are heavenly*.

To convince us farther of this truth, St. Paul goes on to assure us (not like some later divines,
that

that God can be made flesh and blood, or flesh and blood be made God, but what is much more consonant to the whole system of revelation, as well as to the voice of reason) *that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*; neither is it possible for mortal *corrupt* bodies to *inherit* eternity and *incorruption*. And to satisfy us the more fully upon this head, "*behold, says he, I disclose unto you a mystery,*" that is, a circumstance which has hitherto been kept secret, and is not fully explained in the great prophecy of the Revelations, "*we shall not all be dead at the time the resurrection takes place, but at the last trump, when the dead shall be raised with the spiritual immortal bodies before described, those of us who remain alive shall in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, undergo a sudden and a total change, and by an entire new creation of our bodies, be transformed into the very same state in which our deceased brethren will be raised. For whether living or dead, adds the apostle, before we can inherit the promises of the world to come, this corruptible nature of ours must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*"

Is it possible, now, for any doctrine to be delivered in plainer or more intelligible terms than this of the holy apostle respecting our resurrection? And when we consider that this portion of scripture, by it's being so properly appointed by our church, to be used in the divine service at every funeral, is oftener heard and read than any other
part

part of either the Old or New Testament, how can we account for it's not only having been, by great numbers misunderstood, but also contradicted even by the voice of public authority? When men can misapprehend and err so widely in the most clear and obvious articles of the Christian revelation, what meek and humble follower of our Lord and Master, can have the arrogance to assert the infallible orthodoxy of his opinions upon the more abstruse and obscure points of our religious faith? And in the intricate perplexing subtleties of metaphysical speculations, what wise and good man will ever dare to advance, as an article of Christ's gospel, one word beyond what is expressly written? Indeed the subject of our present meditations will afford us a very convincing proof how wrong and dangerous it is, in drawing up the articles of our belief as Christians, to adopt any other manner of expression besides the very words of that gospel we believe.

Of all the various forms and professions of faith, which at different times and in different places have been imposed upon mankind, none has appeared to all parties so just and unexceptionable, as that which we call the Apostle's Creed; for this very sufficient reason, because the several articles of this form alone, are, for the most part, expressed in terms strictly conformable to the very language of the apostles themselves. And it is with pleasure I remark that, though for the sake of subsequent distinctions, some of us are concerned,

cerned, with much greater warmth of zeal to defend and maintain creeds of a very different stamp, which are confessedly *incomprehensible* and unintelligible to the mind of man, yet as Christians this is the only one with which we have any thing to do, because it is this alone into which we are all baptized. And even this, by the deviation of one word only from the literal expression of the holy scriptures, is not entirely the doctrine of the apostles. It teaches us to believe in *the resurrection of the body*, and by the use of that one unscriptural phrase, has laid the foundation of that erroneous opinion, that we shall rise again from the dead with the same kind of bodies in which we now live; a notion which St. Paul has taken particular pains to obviate and contradict, throughout the whole tenor of the chapter now before us. Our *earthly* bodies, as being incapable of immortality, he tells us, will not be raised again; but that God will then, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, create and give mankind new and *incorruptible* bodies, fitted for that *spiritual* life, into which our resurrection will be a second birth. And as these *spiritual bodies* did not exist before, they cannot, with the least propriety, be said to rise again; there will not therefore be a resurrection of *the body*, and this article of the belief ought to have been expressed in the words which our blessed Saviour always uses upon this subject, and which are indeed adopted into what we call the Nicene Creed; "*the resurrection of the dead.*"

There

There is still one other expression of St. Paul, in the close of his argument on this head, which is highly deserving our regard ; he tells us, that he explains to us a *mystery*, when he informs us that *the dead shall be raised and the living shall be changed at the last trump; for the trumpet, says he, shall sound.*

The chief cause of those endless controversies in divinity, which we sometimes see carried on by Christians, with a very unchristian spirit, is, that men will not be at the pains, by comparing different corresponding passages of holy scripture together, and observing the connection which each has with the other, as well as with the general intent and meaning of the particular book or chapter in which it is placed, to discover what expressions are to be taken in a literal, and what in a figurative sense, without which there is no doctrine so wild and irrational that the Bible may not be made to teach. But I would fain hope that none of all this audience are so absurdly ignorant, as in this place to understand the apostle in a literal sense; to imagine there are really such things as *trumpets* in heaven, or that God will use the sound of a *trumpet* to call the dead to life again. Our Lord and Master gives us other notions of that all-powerful summons*, "*Verily verily I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.*" The words *last trump, and the trumpet shall sound,*

* John v. 25.

are evidently metaphorical ; and if we would understand their real meaning we must turn to the tenth chapter of the Revelations of St. John, and there we shall find the very *mystery* which St. Paul here declares he is explaining.

The prophecies of holy scripture, for many obvious reasons, were not calculated to be clearly understood before the destined time of their completion. They are therefore, for the most part, couched in phrases highly figurative and metaphorical. But whosoever has studied those parts of divine revelation, with the attention they deserve from every disciple of Jesus Christ, and observed particularly the metaphors used in the predictions which have actually been already fulfilled, will find a great uniformity and propriety in the use of those figurative expressions. Thus, to instance in the case before us, because, in common life, the trumpet was constantly employed to give the signal for war and battle, in the emblematic language of prophecy, the sound of the trumpet always signifies the breaking out of some great war amongst men, which would be followed by such events as are the main objects of the prophecy. Accordingly we find St. John describing * the seven great wars, that were to occasion all the future important revolutions upon earth, under the figure of *seven angels*, sounding *seven trumpets* after each other. The four first are clearly prophetic of the four grand invasions

* Rev. viii. 6.

of the Roman Empire by those barbarous nations which put a final period to it's existence in these western parts of the world, and laid the foundations of all those separate kingdoms into which we see Europe at this day divided.

By the sounding of the *fifth and sixth trumpets*, the holy prophet predicted the memorable invasions of the Saracens and Turks, and the total destruction of the eastern part of the Roman empire, by the final victory of the *Ottomans*, and the establishment of their dominion at Constantinople. And it is observable, that by the uninterrupted order, in which these *six angels* are mentioned as sounding their trumpets, St. John intimates, what we find from history was true in fact, that no considerable space of time would intervene between the commencement of those six wars, which were to end in the total overthrow of the long continued and wide extended empire of ancient Rome. But between the accomplishment of that signal event, and the breaking out of the next and only war, which was to produce any further great and important change in the kingdoms of this world, he suggests * to us, the interposition of an interval of many years. The grand events of that intervening time, which are the subject of the subsequent prophecy, that makes up the remainder of this valuable book of the Revelations, are alluded to in *the voices* uttered by *seven thunders*, which the

* Rev. x.

prophet is commanded at that time to seal up and not to write them. But he goes on to tell us, in the words of the archangel, whom he beheld, in the vision, coming down from heaven, that *in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

It is this *mystery* that St. Paul unfolds to us in this Epistle to the Corinthians : he assures us, that *the trumpet of the seventh angel shall, at length, sound*; the wars predicted by it assuredly take place, and lead to the great and final revolution of all the kingdoms of the earth. And he calls it *the last trump*, because the glorious kingdom of Christ will then immediately appear, in which God has foretold us by his prophet Isaiah *, *that nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

At the beginning of this reign of Christ, the resurrection and spiritual change of those true and faithful servants of their blessed master, who shall be thought worthy to be partakers of the happiness of his kingdom, will assuredly be effected; and they will *reign with him for a thousand years.* This is what St. John calls † *the first resurrection*; and what St. Paul distinguishes by the resurrection of *those that are Christ's at his coming.* But at the conclusion of this appointed reign of Christ, the world itself will be destroyed, and then shall all mankind

* Isa. ii. 4.

† Rev. xx. 5.

be raised from the dead. And when the Son of God shall have thus completely triumphed over all the enemies of man, according to the predictions of the ancient prophecies concerning him, the dominion of the grave will be totally destroyed, and *death itself will be swallowed up in victory.*

To a sincere and faithful Christian then, who has the firmest grounds to hope that he shall be made partaker of such a glorious resurrection, what terror! what sting is there in death? or what conquest can the grave have over him? *The sting of death* consists only in *sin* and wickedness, and the *strength of sin* in the rigour of the old law. But, thanks be to God, to all those who truly believe and faithfully obey the gospel, he hath now given a certain *victory* over both, *through* the favour of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, seeing we have the sure promises of these things, let us, in order to qualify ourselves for a joyful participation of them, * cleanse ourselves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* Amidst all the allurements of vice, and the numerous spiritual dangers to which our present state is exposed, let us still continue *stedfast* and *unmoveable* both in the principles and practice of our amiable religion; *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, because we are now sure, that whatever instances of self-denial, whatever pains and labour, the conscientious dis-

* 2 Cor. vii. 1.

charge of our Christian duty may at present cost us, our *labour will not be in vain*, but we shall be infinitely rewarded at the resurrection of the just. Let us consider too, that not only our eternal happiness depends upon our obeying faithfully the precepts of the gospel, but also, that eternal misery * will be the certain, though fatal, consequence of our disobedience and impenitent wickedness. For though our gracious Redeemer assures us, that all the dead † *shall bear his voice and come forth*; yet the good only, he tells us, *shall come forth unto the resurrection of happiness and eternal life*, but the wicked *unto the resurrection of damnation*.

* Matt. xxv. 46.

† John v. 28, 29.

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